



STUDENT ASSOCIATION of  
SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

# Constitution

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## **ARTICLE I – PURPOSE:**

The purpose and ideals of the Student Association of Southern Adventist University, established by this constitution shall be as follows:

1. To promote Christian fellowship, unity, and a lifestyle of discipleship among the students, faculty, and staff of Southern, building on the foundation of the principles of God's Word and thus producing a community that shall graphically demonstrate through people the everlasting character of the infinite, personal God.
2. To bring together, under central leadership and direction, various co-curricular and extracurricular student activities that contribute to a healthy Adventist Christian collegiate community.
3. To use the physical, financial, and social potential of such a community to develop an individual and collective Christ-like ministry to others.
4. To represent our collective views to the administration, of Southern and to lobby for the interests of the students to the administration of Southern Adventist University.
5. To originate and appropriately fund student projects and activities and to discuss, propose, and initiate action on matters concerning student welfare.
6. To maintain a forum for expressing the views and interests of the students, and to promote and defend the rights of students.
7. To inquire into, and be honestly informed of, the reasons for any Southern policy affecting students, the process by which it was adopted, and the means by which it might be properly changed.
8. To provide opportunities for students to develop leadership qualities and standards.
9. To recognize such individuals, as deemed necessary, who go above and beyond the call of duty in service to their fellow students, their teachers, and their respective extra-curricular fields, whether on campus or in our region's communities.

Towards the realization of these goals, this organization dedicates its time and energies, following the standards of this Constitution.

**ARTICLE II - NAME:**

The name of this organization shall be the Student Association of Southern Adventist University which shall be hereafter abbreviated in this Constitution as SA. "Southern Adventist University" shall be hereafter abbreviated in this Constitution as Southern.

### **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP:**

#### Section 1 – Undergraduate Membership

Any undergraduate student of the University taking twelve or more hours of class work shall be a voting member of this organization and shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges thereof.

#### Section 2 – Graduate Membership

Any graduate student who takes six or more hours of class work and is willing to pay the amount of tuition equal to a full time undergraduate student entitles them to all said privileges of membership in the SA General Assembly.

## **ARTICLE IV – AUTHORITY:**

### Section 1 – Powers

The SA derives its authority from the University and from the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### Section 2 – Positions

The Vice President for Student Development shall serve as the Faculty Coordinator, and shall be a non-voting member of the SA Senate, the SA General Assembly, and all SA Committees. The Faculty Coordinator shall have veto authority over all actions of the constituent bodies of the SA. The University President shall appoint all SA Faculty Advisors upon consulting with the SA Faculty Coordinator.

### Section 2 – Veto Power

The SA Faculty Coordinator shall have veto power over any and all actions of the SA. This veto must be enacted within three days after the actions intended for annulment have been made and may be overruled by the University Student Development Committee by a simple majority vote.

### Section 3 – Notification

The SA Faculty Coordinator shall be notified by the appropriate SA Officer(s) of any SA Branch meetings at least twenty-four hours in advance of any said meeting.

### Section 4 – Document Changes

This Constitution, the Bylaws, and other related SA documents, may be changed at any time and for any reason by a two-thirds vote of the SA Senate membership. The University Student Development Committee, with a majority vote, may enact interim changes between meetings of the SA Senate.

### Section 5 – Robert’s Rules of Order

Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised shall be the parliamentary authority in all matters not defined by this Constitution and other SA documents.

### Section 6 – Specific Actions

This Constitution, the Bylaws, and other related SA documents shall have full authority to require and prohibit specific actions to be made by the Student Association.

### Section 7 – Consequences

There shall be a 3-strike system in place to regulate the upholding of this Constitution.

1. First Strike: Verbal Warning

The first time that any SA member is found to be not upholding the Constitution, Bylaws, or Elections Manual shall be notified by the SA Parliamentarian as soon as he/she is notified. Additionally, the Parliamentarian will document this first strike in writing.

2. Second Strike: Formal Write-Up

The second instance that any SA member is not upholding the Constitution, Bylaws or Elections Manual, that SA member will receive a formal write-up explaining the details of the violation. The SA member must meet with the SA President and SA Parliamentarian to discuss the violation. Additionally, this write-up will be signed by the Faculty Coordinator

3. Third Strike: Possible Termination

Upon the third instance of violation, the SA member must meet with the Faculty advisors for SA, which may result in their termination from SA, which includes a loss of pay.



## **ARTICLE V – THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:**

### **Section 1 – Membership**

The SA General Assembly shall consist of all eligible Southern students, undergraduate and graduate, who meet the requirements as stated in Article III of this Constitution. All eligible members are included in the voting membership.

### **Section 2 – Voting Process**

The voting process shall be further detailed in the SA Elections Manual.

### **Section 4 – Assembly Meetings**

1. SA General Assembly meetings may be called by the SA President or by request of the SA Senate. There shall be a minimum of one meeting per semester specifically designated as a general business meeting.
2. A quorum shall consist of those SA General Assembly members present at a regularly scheduled designated business meeting.

### **Section 5 – Petitions and Overrides**

The voting membership of the SA General Assembly shall have the power to override any action taken by any SA Branch. Petitions for such overrides shall be validated by ten percent of the member's signatures from the SA General Assembly. Such an override shall occur only after a two-thirds majority of the participating members of the General Assembly vote for it.

### **Section 6 – Expressing Concerns**

Each member of the SA General Assembly shall have the right to express concerns on regulations and policies of the University, question decisions of SA, and access the SA budget, SA Constitution, and other related documents. Such concerns should be brought to the SA Senate first, at which point Senate will bring the times in question to the appropriate committees, both in Senate and in the University.

## **ARTICLE VI – THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH:**

### Section 1 – Operating Bodies

The powers of the SA Executive Branch shall be exercised by two operating bodies: the SA Cabinet and the SA Directorate.

### Section 2 – Limitations

1. No individual may run for and/or occupy more than one SA Office simultaneously during any given elective term, nor shall a SA Officer be a SA Senator.
2. Any individual who holds a SA Executive Branch position must reside within thirty miles of Collegedale, Tennessee, during the school year.

### Section 3 – Membership

The Membership of the SA Cabinet shall consist of the following SA officers:

1. The President.
2. The Executive Vice President.
3. The Social Vice President.
4. The Executive Secretary.
5. The Parliamentarian.
6. The Public Relations Director.
7. The Financial Vice President.
8. The Assistant Finance Director.
9. The Accent Editor in Chief.
10. The Memories Editor.
11. The Strawberry Festival Director
12. The Studio 4109: LIVE! Executive Director.

### Section 4 – Cabinet Duties

The SA Cabinet shall:

1. Act as the operating body to the SA General Assembly and the SA Senate.
2. Carry out specific courses of action as directed by the SA General Assembly and the SA Senate, including the Constitutional duties of the SA Executive Branch.
3. Establish the SA working policies for the current fiscal year and present them to the SA Senate for its approval, confirmed by two-thirds majority present.
4. Develop long range plans for the SA General Assembly.
5. Carry out SA operations deemed necessary between meetings of the SA Senate and/or general business meetings of the SA General Assembly.

## Section 5 – Officer Duties

The duties of the SA Officers are more fully described in the SA Bylaws.

## Section 6 – Appointments

SA Executive Appointments are made by the SA President and the SA Executive Vice President and confirmed by two thirds vote of the SA Senate. The SA President and SA Executive Vice President shall seek consultation from other SA officers as such SA Executive Appointments warrant. The SA Executive Appointments shall be divided into the following four sections:

1. SA Cabinet Appointments shall consist of appointed SA Officers, as defined by the SA Bylaws. All SA Cabinet Appointments are confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the SA Senate.
2. SA Directorate Appointments shall consist of all SA Representatives to different University Committees, Boards, Councils, and other similar bodies. Such SA Directorate Appointments are made by the SA President and confirmed by two-thirds majority of the SA Senate.
3. SA Legislative Appointments shall occur at the beginning of each semester in order to fill all spots for the SA Senate. These appointments are made by the SA Executive Vice President upon consultation with the SA Parliamentarian and SA Executive Secretary.
4. SA Special Appointments shall occur when an elected SA Officer is unable to fulfill his/her duties and the SA President appoints a replacement, which must be confirmed by two-thirds majority of the SA Senate.

## **ARTICLE VII – THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

### **Section 1 – Powers Policy**

The powers of the SA Legislative Branch shall be exercised by a unicameral policy-making body known as the SA Senate.

### **Section 2 – Precincts**

Electoral Districts and Legislative Precincts shall be determined each year by the Executive Vice President-elect and the SA Parliamentarian-elect according to the following specifications:

1. The SA General Assembly membership shall be divided into districts by academic department.
2. Each district shall be divided into precincts.
3. SA Senators will be assigned precincts according to the following specifications:
  - a. Each precinct is entitled to 1 senator for every 90 constituents, rounded up.

### **Section 3 – Voting Membership**

The voting membership of the SA Senate shall consist of all SA Senators, and the SA Executive Vice President. The SA Executive Vice President shall only vote in the case of tie. All voting actions shall adhere to parliamentary procedure unless otherwise noted.

### **Section 4 – Powers**

The powers of the SA Senate shall be as follows:

1. To revise and ratify the working policies of the SA.
2. To pass any measures necessary for this Constitution to function.
3. To regulate the appropriations of all SA funds and ratify the annual budget as needed, with a two-thirds vote.
4. To review and regulate the programs and stated objectives of the SA, including all SA documents.
5. To approve or deny all SA Executive Appointments requiring a two-thirds vote.
6. To override, with a two-thirds vote, any veto of the SA President.
7. To exercise any constitutional power not specifically delegated to the SA General Assembly, or any other SA Branch.
8. To form special committees for projects as deemed necessary by the SA Senate and Executive Vice President.

### **Section 5 – Duties and Committees**

The duties of the SA Senators and the descriptions of the SA Committees are listed in the SA Bylaws.

## Section 6 – SA Senate Meetings

1. SA Senate meetings may be called by the SA Executive Vice President or by a petition signed by one fourth of the SA Senate members. In case of the latter, the sponsoring SA Senator shall notify the membership of the SA Senate and the SA Faculty Coordinator in accordance with SA procedural guidelines.
2. SA Senate meetings shall be held twice a month on a biweekly basis, excluding vacations and test weeks. The SA Executive Vice President shall schedule these regular meetings in the spring of year that he/she was elected, prior to the term served.
3. A quorum, which is to be defined as two thirds of the voting members of the SA Senate must be present at all SA Senate meetings in order to conduct business.
4. All SA Senate meetings shall be open to the SA General Assembly, and notification of such meetings shall be posted in the proper locations and printed in the proper publications.
5. All SA Senate minutes shall be open for public inspection.
6. All SA Senate meeting agendas must be set at least twenty-four hours in advance.

## Section 7 – Majority Vote

The SA Senate's actions may be reviewed or ratified by the SA General Assembly at any time deemed necessary with a simple majority vote.

## **ARTICLE VIII – THE MEDIA BRANCH:**

### Section 1 – Powers

The powers of the SA Media Branch shall be exercised through the SA Media Board.

### Section 2 – Duties of the Media Board

The duties of the SA Media Board are fully described in the SA Bylaws.

### Section 3 – Duties

The duties of the SA Editors and Producer are fully described by in the SA Bylaws.

### Section 4 – Ethical Responsibilities

The SA shall recognize the validity of an ethical and responsible free press and support the SA Media Branch in the distribution of informational materials to the SA General Assembly.

### Section 5 – Membership

The four SA publications and productions shall be as follows:

1. The Southern Accent, the student newspaper.
2. The Southern Memories, the student yearbook.
3. Festival Studios, the student-led end-of-year production.
4. Studio 4109: LIVE!, the student-led variety show and production service provider.

## **ARTICLE X – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:**

### **Section 1 – Financial Standards**

Appropriations, transactions and disbursements of the SA funds shall proceed in harmony with the current SA budget, the direction of the SA Financial Vice President of the SA Executive Branch, as defined in the SA Bylaws, as well as the SA Financial Manual.

### **Section 2 – Budget Creation and Approval**

Before the end of the academic school year, the incoming Financial Vice President, upon consultation with the SA Officers-elect and officers-designate, SA Faculty Coordinator, and SA Financial Advisor, shall prepare and present a proposed SA general budget for the new fiscal year. The SA Senate shall ratify the said budget, with any modifications deemed necessary, by a two-thirds vote. This budget must be adjusted at the beginning of the next school year to reflect current data and must receive an additional ratification by the SA Senate, with any modifications deemed necessary, by a two-thirds vote.

### **Section 3 – Audits**

1. The financial records of the SA shall be audited at least once each fiscal year.
2. The SA designated auditor who is auditing the SA financial records shall appear before the SA Senate to present a detailed record of the findings.

## **ARTICLE XI – ELECTIONS:**

### **Section 1 – Elected Positions**

The following officers shall be elected for a one year term:

1. The President.
2. The Executive Vice President.
3. The Social Vice President.

### **Section 2 – Procedures**

Election procedures shall be described in the SA Elections Manual and shall be enforced by the SA Senate Elections Committee and SA Elections Management and Oversight Task Force. Amendments to the Elections Manual shall be approved only by a two-thirds vote of the SA Senate.

### **Section 3 – Term Length**

The term of office shall run from noon on the day of spring commencement to noon on the day of the next spring commencement.

### **Section 4 – Vacancies**

If a vacancy occurs in an elected office, and less than 60% of the term has been served, a special election to fill the office will be held. If more than 60% of the term has been served, the SA President shall appoint an individual to serve out the remainder of the term; this individual must be confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the SA Senate before assuming his/her office., If a vacancy occurs in the office of the SA President, the Executive Vice President may become President, following the order of succession as described in the SA Elections Manual.



## **ARTICLE XII – REMOVAL FROM OFFICE:**

### Section 1 – Vote of No Confidence

1. Any elected SA Officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of no confidence by his/her voting constituents A vote of no confidence is called when one of the following situations occurs:
  - a. A petition for a vote of no confidence is signed by 10% of the voting constituents and presented to the SA Faculty Coordinator.
  - b. The SA Senate calls for a vote of no confidence by a two-thirds majority vote.
  - c. The University Student Development Committee deems such actions necessary. Procedures for the vote of no confidence are specified in the SA Elections manual.

### Section 2 – Revocation

SA Cabinet Appointments and SA Directorate Appointments may be revoked by the SA President. This power does not extend to SA Legislative Appointments and SA Special appointments.

## **ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS:**

### Section 1 – Proposals

Any proposed amendment to this Constitution, the SA Bylaws, and the SA election manual, must be presented at a duly scheduled SA Senate meeting after posting on the SA website. Voting on such an amendment shall take place at a subsequent duly scheduled SA Senate meeting and shall require a two-thirds majority to be enacted. All amendments are subject to two-thirds majority vote by the Student Development Committee of the University. Any SA amendments, once enacted, shall take effect within twenty-four hours, unless otherwise stated in the amendment. Such SA amendments shall only be overturned by a majority vote of the SA General Assembly. Such amendments must be posted on the SA website within one week after the amendment has been enacted.

### Section 2 – Availability

Convenient, working copies of this Constitution, the SA Bylaws, Election Manual, and of other related documents shall be made and updated as necessary after amendments to the original documents have been made.

### Section 3 – Overturning

Any SA Constitutional amendments may be overturned by a majority vote of the voting members of the SA General Assembly. Such a vote shall take place if a petition of 100 signatures is submitted by said members.

## **ARTICLE XIV – THE BYLAWS:**

### **Section 1 – Functions**

The Bylaws shall function within the SA in a working capacity that is in harmony with the constitution. The guidelines for the Bylaws shall be established by the SA Officers-elect before the last Senate meeting of the year, in order to receive voting approval. These guidelines shall be established in coordination with the University Office of Student Development. These Bylaws shall be subjected to approval by a two-thirds majority vote of the sitting SA Senate. These Bylaws and their related documents shall be considered constitutional in nature.

### **Section 2 – Executive Branch Duties**

The duties of the SA President, the SA Executive Vice President, the SA Social Vice President and other SA Officers shall be defined in the SA Bylaws.

### **Section 3 – Legislative Branch Duties**

The duties of the SA Senators and the oversight responsibilities of the SA Senate Committees shall be defined in the SA Bylaws.

### **Section 4 – Media Branch Duties**

The duties of the SA Editors and Directors shall be defined in the SA Bylaws. The University Office of Student Development shall advise in such matters concerning the SA Media Branch.

**ARTICLE XV – DOCUMENT OF FINAL PRECEDENCE:**

This Constitution shall take precedence over its predecessors and other formerly used, associated documents by the authority of the SA General Assembly and/or the University Senate.

**ARTICLE XVI – ENACTMENT:**

This Constitution shall have full force and effect following passage, and approval by a two-thirds majority vote of the SA Senate.

**ARTICLE XVII – CONCLUSION:**

The Student Association of Southern Adventist University shall strive to uphold the ideals set forth by this Constitution and to carry out such duties as it is empowered to do.